

CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, CONNECTICUT  
DAN BURTON, INDIANA  
ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, FLORIDA  
JOHN M. McHUGH, NEW YORK  
JOHN L. MICA, FLORIDA  
GIL GUTKNECHT, MINNESOTA  
MARK E. SOUDER, INDIANA  
STEVEN C. LATOURETTE, OHIO  
TODD RUSSELL, PLATTS, PENNSYLVANIA  
CHRIS CANNON, UTAH  
JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR., TENNESSEE  
JOICE MILLER, MICHIGAN  
JIM R. TURNER, OHIO  
JIM ISSA, CALIFORNIA  
JON C. PORTER, NEVADA  
KENNY MARCHANT, TEXAS  
LYNN A. WESTMORELAND, GEORGIA  
PATRICK T. McHENRY, NORTH CAROLINA  
CHARLES W. DENT, PENNSYLVANIA  
VIRGINIA FOXX, NORTH CAROLINA  
JEAN SCHMIDT, OHIO  
VACANCY

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5074  
FACSIMILE (202) 225-3974  
MINORITY (202) 225-5051  
TTY (202) 225-6852

<http://reform.house.gov>

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

TOM LANTOS, CALIFORNIA  
MAJOR R. OWENS, NEW YORK  
EDOLPHUS TOWNS, NEW YORK  
PAUL E. KANJORSKI, PENNSYLVANIA  
CAROLYN B. MALONEY, NEW YORK  
ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS, MARYLAND  
DENNIS J. KUCINICH, OHIO  
DANNY K. DAVIS, ILLINOIS  
WM. LACY CLAY, MISSOURI  
DIANE E. WATSON, CALIFORNIA  
STEPHEN F. LYNCH, MASSACHUSETTS  
CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, MARYLAND  
LINDA T. SANCHEZ, CALIFORNIA  
C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER, MARYLAND  
BRIAN HIGGINS, NEW YORK  
ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

BERNARD SANDERS, VERMONT, INDEPENDENT

### SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, EMERGING THREATS, AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Christopher Shays, Connecticut  
Chairman

Room B-372 Rayburn Building

Washington, D.C. 20515

Tel: 202 225-2548

Fax: 202 225-2382

## "The Evolving National Strategy for Victory in Iraq"

Statement of Rep. Christopher Shays  
July 11, 2006

Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad called Iraq the defining challenge of our time. He said, "What happens in Iraq will shape the future of the Middle East, and the future of the Middle East will shape the future of the world." I think he is right on target.

On April 9, 2003, the bronze statue of Saddam Hussein towering above Baghdad's Firdos Square was torn down. The statue's toppling is viewed as the symbolic point at which Hussein's government ceased to exist, and when hopes were high that hostilities would end.

After a successful military campaign lasting less than six weeks, President Bush declared, "Major combat operations in Iraq have ended. In the battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed. And now our coalition is engaged in securing and reconstructing that country."

Saddam and his government were toppled, but combat operations did not end. The job of securing and reconstructing Iraq has become extremely difficult. The terrorists and insurgents seek to prevent Iraq from having a democratically elected government that respects majority rule and minority rights.

Over the past 38 months, I have visited Iraq twelve times, and this Subcommittee has held ten hearings related to Iraq. I have seen both setbacks and progress in our efforts to help this new nation.

Numerous American and Iraqi officials, and Iraqi citizens, have shared with me their concerns about serious mistakes made by the United States and Coalition Forces. In my judgment flawed planning for post-conflict Iraq by the Department of Defense allowed Americans to be the face of Iraq for more than a year. Failed planning allowed widespread looting immediately after Coalition forces took control; indiscriminate de-Baathification of the government workforce; and dissolution of Iraqi security forces—military, police and border forces.

After digging ourselves into a deep hole during the first year, we have made significant progress. The first major success was the transfer of power to Iraqis in June 2004. This was followed by the Iraqi people electing an interim government in January 2005, which then drafted a constitution. The Iraqi people ratified that constitution in October 2005, and elected a four-year representative government in December 2005, with 76 percent voter participation.

Since June 2004, the members of the Iraqi Security Forces have nearly tripled to 265,000. They have made strides in combat effectiveness and leadership. They are better trained and equipped and are developing the capability to act independently of Coalition Forces. Today these security forces are taking the lead in controlling almost 30 percent of the country.

The Iraqi economy is growing. The International Monetary Fund estimates that Gross Domestic Product grew by 2.6 percent last year and is expected to grow by 10.4 percent this year.

Initially, the Administration relied on the "Military Campaign Plan," a classified military campaign plan, as its strategy for transforming Iraq into a representative democracy. Then, in November 2005, the Administration published the "National Strategy for Victory in Iraq." This roadmap established a three-pronged strategy: build stable pluralistic national institutions; clear areas of enemy control; and restore Iraq's neglected infrastructure.

As the situation has evolved, so has US strategy. The Administration is focused on assisting the new Iraqi government in promoting its own agenda of national reconciliation; improving security; increasing oil and electricity production; and engaging other nations in Iraq's development.

To help implement Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki's own agenda, President Bush, in a June 14 news conference said we will continue to conduct joint military operations with Iraqi Security Forces to secure the cities of Baghdad and Ramadi, send senior cabinet level advisors to Iraq to improve oil and electricity production, and increase diplomatic outreach to other countries promoting assistance to Iraq.

To end the war, and begin a withdrawal of US forces, the US needs to particularly support Iraq's national reconciliation. National reconciliation entails amending Iraq's Constitution, providing conditional amnesty for insurgents and reversing wholesale de-Baathification. This effort is absolutely essential.

Today, with the help of the Government Accountability Office, Administration witnesses, including Ambassador James Jeffery, Ms. Mary Beth Long, Brigadier General Michael Jones and renowned experts on Iraq, we examine our "National Strategy for Victory in Iraq," and recent statements by President Bush after his meeting with Prime Minister Al-Maliki in Iraq, by:

- Assessing the evolution of the US "National Strategy for Victory in Iraq" in response to changing security, political and economic events, and, perhaps more importantly,

- Evaluating the evolving strategies themselves, to better understand their chances for success.

The United States liberated Iraq from a tyrant who tortured and killed his own people. We made mistakes in our efforts to secure and rebuild the country, but we are correcting those mistakes and progress is being made. Yes, the task is difficult, but that only reinforces the need to closely examine our roadmap for success.

I am not afraid we will lose the war in Iraq, in Iraq. I am deeply concerned we will lose the war in Iraq here at home. Our efforts to remove Saddam Hussein from power and help bring democracy to the most troubled part of the world is truly a noble effort that must succeed, because as Ambassador Khalilzad said, "What happens in Iraq will shape the future of the Middle East, and the future of the Middle East will shape the future of the world."

We thank all the witnesses for taking the time to appear before us today.